



Topsfield Finance Committee  
Minutes to the Meetings  
March 27, 2013

**I. Call to Order:** Mark Lyons, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, with Heidi Bond, Karen Dow, Jon Guido, Kathy Hartmann and Daniel Shugrue. Selectman Laura Powers, Selectman Kenneth Vogel and Town Administrator Ginna Wilder were also present. Paul Dierze joined the meeting at 7:06 PM. Town Moderator George Hall joined the meeting at 7:28 PM. Chairman of the Topsfield Elementary School Committee Jeanine Cunniff joined the meeting at 8:00 PM. Selectman Richard Gandt joined the meeting at 8:27 PM.

**II. Minutes:** A motion was made by Heidi Bond to accept the March 18, 2013 minutes as amended, seconded by Karen Dow, voted in favor 7-0.

**III. Reserve Fund Status:**

**Veteran's Benefits:** A motion was made by Jon Guido to approve the Veteran's Benefits Reserve Fund Transfer Request to Veteran's Benefits: Service in the amount of \$2,441.00, seconded by Karen Dow, voted in favor 7-0.

**Town Clerk:** The Town Clerk has changed the estimated special election budget to \$2,210.00.

**IV. Snow and Ice:** A motion was made by Karen Dow to authorize the Town to incur liability and make deficit expenditures for Fiscal Year 2013 for snow and ice removal, seconded by Paul Dierze, voted in favor 7-0.

**V. Ethics:** The Town Clerk notified the Finance Committee of the new mandatory State Ethics Training. The certificates of completion must be returned to Mark Lyons from individual Members by April 5, 2013.

**VI. Finance Committee Letter:** The Committee reviewed and edited the draft annual Finance Committee letter to the Town.

**VII. Department Budget Review and Approval:** Chairman Lyons stated that the Committee reserves the right to supersede or modify the following budget approvals by future vote. He also asked the Fin Com members to confirm the figures on the Article III Tracking Worksheet.

**Town Clerk:** A motion was made by Karen Dow to set the Town Clerk Salary Line Item at \$53,195.00 annually, seconded by Paul Dierze, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion noted that the \$300 Constable salary comes from that line item as well.

**Snow and Ice:** A motion was made by Karen Dow to reallocate the Highway Snow and Ice Regular Time Wages and Vehicle Oil and Lube to the Highway General Wages Budget in the amount of \$249,092.00, the Other line in the amount of \$215,094.00,

the Wages Maintenance line in the amount of \$26,600.00 and Wages Other in the amount of \$1,695,095.00, seconded by Paul Dierze, voted in favor 7-0.

Insurance: A motion was made by Karen Dow to increase the Insurance Liability Accident Workman's Comp \$355,439.00 and the Life Medical Medicare \$1,945,203.00, seconded by Jon Guido, voted in favor 7-0.

Assessors: Discussion focused on the revised Assessors budget, particularly additional training, advertising and supply costs.

Elementary schools: The revised Elementary Schools budget totals \$6,339,174.00 which is \$109.00 over the revised Fin Com guideline.

Police: Discussion focused on the continuing issues of the FY2013 deficit.

Water: Budget as its own Warrant Article. Will be dealt with in warrant article recommendations. A motion was made by Paul Dierze to approve the Water Dept budget with Salary \$7,240.00 Wages \$159,791.00 Other \$273,054.00, Total Operating \$506,085.00, Debt Service \$140,572.00, Reserve Fund \$130,000.00, Unanticipated Emergency \$76,500.00, Total Direct \$853,157.00, Total Indirect \$106,229.00, Total Operating Budget \$959,386.00, seconded by Karen Dow, voted in favor 7-0.

**VIII. Budget Model Review:** The Finance Committee FY2014 Budget Model version 2.0 has been updated to include the free cash balance, Maconomet's budget, all of the approved department base budgets, all of the approved department Unfunded Essentials budgets and the 3/11/13 draft of the 2013 Annual and Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles.

**IX. Consent Calendar Discussion:** An explanation will be printed and included in the warrant. A motion would be placed on the floor to the effect of recommending positive action on articles 8-14. Once the motion is on the floor Town Moderator will explain that any article can be pulled out of the consent agenda for individual consideration otherwise this must pass unanimously. No discussion is allowed on the articles in the consent agenda. This is not meant to railroad anything through, rather to expedite the approval of boilerplate annual articles without changes.

**X. Special Town Meeting Warrant Article Recommendations:** In a series of motions, the Finance Committee voted actions on the following Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles as numbered in the attached draft Warrant:

By motion of Karen Dow, seconded by Paul Dierze, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Acceptance of M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 13D, Article Fourth, voted in favor 7-0.

Before discussing Alfalfa Farm Petition, Article Fifth, Mark Lyons recused himself, temporarily transferring the Chair to Paul Dierze and abstained from discussion. Discussion focused on the continued conversation with legal counsel on this item and whether to include the details of the petition on the Warrant itself. At the conclusion of the Article Fifth discussion, Paul Dierze returned the Chair to Mark Lyons.

**XI. Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article Recommendations:** In a series of motions, the Finance Committee voted actions on the following Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles as numbered in the attached draft Warrant:

- By motion of Karen Dow, seconded by Daniel Shugrue, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Reserve Fund, Article Second, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Water Department Operating Budget, Article Fourth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Kathy Hartmann, seconded by Heidi Bond, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Masconomet Regional School District Assessment, Article Fifth, subject to minor clerical revision, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion focused on punctuation typos and a rounding figure.
- By motion of Kathy Hartmann, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on North Shore Vocational School District Assessment, Article Sixth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Kathy Hartmann, seconded by Jon Guido, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical School, Article Seventh, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Daniel Shugrue, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Lease of Emerson Field, Article Eighth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Grant Authorization for Town Projects, Article Ninth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Massachusetts Department of Transportation Contracts, Article Tenth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Daniel Shugrue, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Park Revolving Fund, Article Eleventh, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Daniel Shugrue, seconded by Kathy Hartmann, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Cemetery Revolving Fund, Article Twelfth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Conservation Commission Revolving Fund, Article Thirteenth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Daniel Shugrue, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Landfill – Annual Engineering & Monitoring, Article Fourteenth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Daniel Shugrue, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Landfill – Field and Infrastructure Maintenance, Article Fifteenth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Replace Town Hall Copiers, Article Sixteenth, voted in favor 7-0.

- By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Town Hall Computer Technology, Article Seventeenth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Heidi Bond, seconded by Jon Guido, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Police Station Telephone System, Article Eighteenth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Purchase of Document Scanner for Inspectional Services, Article Nineteenth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Purchase of a Pick-up Truck, Article Twentieth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Heidi Bond, seconded by Kathy Hartmann, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Purchase of a 4x4 Police Vehicle, Article Twenty-first, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Daniel Shugrue, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fiscal Year 2014 Additional Real Estate Tax Exemption, Article Twenty-second, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Daniel Shugrue, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Property Tax Exemption for Cooperatives, Article Twenty-third, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion focused on the specific properties in town that would qualify as cooperatives and the populations that would receive these benefits.
- By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Veterans Tax Work-off Program, Article Twenty-fourth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Paul Dierze, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fund Town Employment Separation, Article Twenty-fifth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fund Post Employment Benefits, Article Twenty-sixth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Kathy Hartmann, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Tri-Town Council on Youth and Family Services, Article Twenty-seventh, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion focused on the assessment of the total sum.
- By motion of Kathy Hartmann, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Senior Care Citizen Petition, Article Twenty-eighth, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion focused on the details of this citizen petition which funds senior care services through donations and federal and state grants.
- By motion of Heidi Bond, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Repair of Town Facilities, Article Twenty-ninth, voted in favor 7-0.
- By motion of Karen Dow, seconded by Heidi Bond, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Purchase Library Generator, Article Thirtieth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Daniel Shugrue, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Update Elementary School Security, Article Thirty-first, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion focused on questions from the public that might be brought forth during Town Meeting.

A motion was made by Heidi Bond, seconded by Karen Dow, to recommend positive action on Town wide Message Alert System, Article Thirty-second, voted against 0-7.

By motion of Heidi Bond, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends no action on Town wide Message Alert System, Article Thirty-second, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion focused on the timing, expense, organization and execution of this emergency alert plan.

By motion of Karen Dow, seconded by Kathy Hartmann, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Map Update, Article Thirty-third, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Heidi Bond, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fire Department Liability Risk Reduction Training, Article Thirty-fourth, voted in favor of positive action 7-0. Discussion focused on the source of funding for this article.

By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Employee Compensation Study, Article Thirty-fifth, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion focused on the staffing numbers driving this study.

By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Water Main Design – Washington Street, Article Thirty-sixth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Repair of Roadway – River Road, Article Thirty-seventh, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Water Storage Tanks – Design of Repairs and Improvements, Article Thirty-eighth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Fund for Minor Replacement Water Mains, Article Thirty-ninth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Gravel Pack Wells – Implementation at Perkins Row Pumping Station, Article Fortieth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Paul Dierze, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Water Treatment Plant Design, Article Forty-first, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Daniel Shugrue, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Municipal Solid Waste Ten Year Agreement, Article Forty-fifth, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Karen Dow, seconded by Paul Dierze, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Amend Animal Control Bylaw, Article Forty-sixth, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion focused on fee changes based on a state statute.

By motion of Jon Guido, seconded by Karen Dow, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Reserve for Wages, Article Forty-seventh, voted in favor 7-0.

By motion of Karen Dow, seconded by Heidi Bond, the Finance Committee recommends positive action on Stabilization Fund, Article Forty-eighth, voted in favor 7-0. Discussion focused on the \$200,000.00 addition to the Stabilization Fund. Articles Third, Forty-second, Forty-third, Forty-fourth and Forty-ninth will be considered at a future meeting after public hearings take place and further information becomes available.

**XII. Town Meeting Warrant Article Assignments:**

<b>Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article</b>	<b>Finance Committee Member Initials</b>
<b>Consent Agenda</b>	<b>ML</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>ML</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>ML</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>KD</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>PD</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>KH</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>KH</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>KH</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>PD</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>PD</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>PD</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>ML</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>ML</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>HB</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>PD</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>PD</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>HB</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>JG</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>JG</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>JG</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>JG</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>JG</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>KH</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>KH</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>ML</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>KD</b>
<b>31</b>	<b>DS</b>
<b>32</b>	<b>HB</b>
<b>33</b>	<b>KD</b>
<b>34</b>	<b>HB</b>

35	JG
36	PD
37	PD
37	PD
38	PD
39	PD
40	PD
41	PD
42	PD
43	PD
44	PD
45	DS
46	KD
47	JG
48	ML
49	ML

Special Town Meeting Warrant Article	Finance Committee Member Initials
2	ML
3	ML
4	ML
5	PD

**XIII. Upcoming Meeting Schedule:** The next meeting of the Committee will occur on April 1, 2013 at 7:00 PM in the Proctor School Teachers, Lounge.

**XIV. Update from Topsfield Elementary School Committee:** The Elementary School Committee has entered into discussions for plans to handle special education funding differently to prevent large operating budget fluctuations in the future. Compared schools use methods like single appropriation accounts or a dedicated surplus fund.

**XV. Adjourn:** A motion was made by Karen Dow to adjourn at 9:05 PM, seconded by Paul Dierze, voted in favor 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lexie Winslow

Attachments:

- a) 2013 Annual and Special Town Meeting Warrant, 3-27-2013 Draft
- b) Finance Committee Letter, 3/27/13 version